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New York

President: Mr. Thomson ..... (Fiji)

In the absence of the Co-Chair, Mr. Tozaka (Solomon Islands), Acting Co-Chair, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 4 p.m.

High-level plenary meeting on addressing large movements of refugees and migrants

Agenda items 13 and 117 (*continued*)

Integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields

Follow-up to the outcome of the Millennium Summit

The Acting Co-Chair: I call on His Excellency Mr. Lazăr Comănescu, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Romania

Mr. Comănescu (Romania): Migration is as old as human civilization, but today internal and cross-border migration has grown dramatically, and will continue to do so in our increasingly globalized world. With an unprecedented number of conflicts and crises worldwide, not to mention the perpetuation of numerous negative developments in other regions of the world, large-scale mixed migratory flows are becoming a frequent phenomenon. There are also new trends emerging, such as the increase in environmental problems associated with climate change and natural disasters.

People's reasons for moving differ but are most often interlinked, requiring a multifaceted, visionary approach that goes far beyond immediate humanitarian and security needs. Moreover, given the inherently transboundary nature of international migration, no country can deal with that challenge alone.

Today's meeting is indeed an opportunity to work towards a more cohesive approach in dealing with large movements of refugees and migrants by reinforcing existing frameworks and developing innovative approaches. We have chosen to focus on large movements of migrants and refugees, but our strategy must be framed within the larger debate on the interlinkages between migration and development and the ongoing efforts to improve the international aid architecture.

We should not forget that today's summit meeting follows several international initiatives in this area, including the first-ever World Humanitarian Summit in May. We need to build on the pledges already made so that we can address the underlying causes of the refugee and migration crisis and foster the collective actions needed to confront it. By setting out a range of principles, commitments and understandings, today's newly adopted New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants (resolution 71/1) provides solid ground for strengthening international cooperation based on international solidarity and shared responsibility. Romania pledges its constructive engagement in the follow-up work aimed at adopting the global compacts in 2018.

As we collectively commit to improving the global governance of migration, Romania warmly welcomes

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the decision to include the International Organization for Migration in the United Nations family, building on a long history of close working ties.

Migration was recognized as an enabler of inclusive growth in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, but in order to translate that assertion into national development plans, we need to showcase the evidence base in order to guide the policymaking process and allow for correctly informed public dialogue. Changing the narrative on migration by countering stereotypes, managing expectations and rallying support around a set of shared values is key to adjusting our increasingly multi-ethnic and multicultural societies to the changing global landscape. One of the most effective ways of combating discrimination is through education, both at home and at school.

While we seek to maximize the benefits of migration, we should not downplay its hurdles and costs, which we see especially in so-called desperation migration. The anxieties of the local population also need to be acknowledged and addressed in a fair manner. Romania believes in a holistic and comprehensive approach that takes into account both the consequences and the root causes of the phenomenon. Neither a comprehensive refugee response nor well-managed migration policies can be sustained in the long run if the root causes of such movements are not addressed — for example, by making a genuine effort to prevent and resolve conflict. Migration cannot be dealt with in isolation from other global issues. While action strategies differ and rely on cooperation among the countries of origin, transit and destination, only the implementation of all the relevant 2030 Agenda provisions has the potential of truly transforming the current dynamics.

Europe is experiencing a migration challenge of unprecedented magnitude, which requires resolute action and a long-term strategy. The answer can only be cooperation and joint action on the part of all Member States, while bearing in mind respect for fundamental principles and values. Romania has been, and will continue to be, part of the European response. Although we have not experienced a major influx of displaced people — neither refugees nor migrants — we have supported, in the spirit of solidarity, the efforts at the European Union level, and we will continue to act in a principled way. We will continue to support solutions that combine innovative humanitarian, development and economic instruments, supported by political dialogue and partnerships. In addition to its financial contribution, Romania contributes human resources and technical means for strengthening border control, as well as search-and-rescue operations in the Mediterranean Sea.

That set of measures forms an integral part of our engagement, commitment and shared responsibility with the countries and populations most in need. We aim to concentrate our efforts on measures that include education, basic services, development cooperation and humanitarian assistance, as well as political dialogue. But I will not elaborate further on those subjects. To do that, I will use the opportunity of my statement in Round Table 4, on the theme "Global compact for responsibility-sharing for refugees, respect for international law".

The Acting Co-Chair: I now give the floor to Mr. Hamad Elgizouli, Commissioner of Refugees of the Sudan

Mr. Elgizouli (Sudan) (*spoke in Arabic*): On behalf of my country, I have the pleasure to extend to the General Assembly our thanks and gratitude for organizing this important meeting, which is being held at a time of great need. I would also like to take this opportunity to reaffirm our willingness to cooperate with Member States in implementing the meeting's outcomes.

The Sudan's geographic location, legacy and civilizational values have contributed to the transit of large numbers of refugees at various moments in history and under varying circumstances. The Sudan has been compelled to host, receive and protect refugees, despite all the difficulties we are facing. That situation has remained unchanged for five decades, and the flow of such persons continues. Today, the Sudan hosts more than 2 million refugees from Eritrea, Ethiopia, Somalia, Chad, Central Africa and, more recently, from Syria, Yemen and South Sudan.

The Sudan is fully committed to the relevant international and regional governance machinery and instruments. Large movements of refugees and migrants from neighbouring countries have led to the emergence of new challenges and developments for my country today. They come in the form of mixed migration, illegal migration and escape from camps to cities.

Human mobility has also been linked to the phenomenon of human smuggling and trafficking. My

country has made efforts to eradicate that phenomenon, which include the folllowing.

First, we havee set up of a supreme council for migration, headed by the Deputy President of the Republic. Secondly, a law has been adopted to combat human trafficking.

Thirdly, the 1974 refugee law was replaced by the 2014 refugee law so as to keep up with regional and international changes. The new law includes articles to combat human trafficking. Fourthly, the visa law was amended so that it is compatible with new changes and challenges.

Fifthly, Khartoum hosted a conference in October of 2014, in coordination with the African Union and the European Union, to combat human smuggling and trafficking in the Horn of African. Its outcome is entitled the Khartoum Process. That was followed by a conference in Rome in November of 2014. However, up until now, the recommendations of those conferences have not been implemented. We therefore count on donors to support the Sudan and to implement the outcomes of the conferences so that we can eradicate the inhumane phenomenon of human trafficking.

Sixthly, my country has signed a number of agreements with neighbouring countries to control our borders, in addition to a joint strategy signed with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the International Organization for Migration and the Commission for Refugees aimed at combating the phenomenon of human trafficking, especially in eastern Sudan, given that most of the victims are refugees and asylum-seekers.

The contribution of the international community regarding the sharing of burdens and responsibilities with host countries is based on a humane principle. We need large economic, social and environmental projects in that regard. Emergency situations around the world require donor States to support refugees.

We must identify the root causes for migration and the refugee crisis. We need to seize this opportunity. We also call on all countries to keep their borders open, because closing them will not offer a solution to the problem. We need international cooperation, and we need to consider the root causes in order to prevent that phenomenon.

In line with the outcome document of this high-level meeting on refugees and migrants (resolution 71/1), we reaffirm the need to solve the protracted refugee crisis, including the Palestinian refugee crisis. We also reaffirm the right to return as part of a just solution to the Palestine refugee problem, in accordance with the General Assembly resolutions and the Arab Peace Initiative.

There are large numbers of Sudanese refugees in Chad, amounting to 240,000 persons, residing in camps in eastern Chad. Now that security and peace have returned to Darfur, a large number of them have started to return voluntarily to their homeland. We have held a tripartite meeting with Chad and UNHCR, and we expect to sign a tripartite agreement next month for the return of Sudanese refugees. However, in order to ensure a lasting return, we need to ease the integration of returnees into local communities. We call on UNHCR to implement the repatriation, reintegration, rehabilitation and reconstruction programme.

Khartoum is witnessing a lot of activities in response to the initiative launched by the President of the country for a national and intercommunal dialogue aimed at considering urgent priorities, including political stability and development, which will benefit all segments of society and also impact refugees and control their movements from and into the country.

In conclusion, I would like to address the large movements of South Sudanese refugees as a result of the recent war. Their numbers, up to August, have reached more than 700,000 refugees, mostly women and children. We have sought to treat them in accordance with international and national laws and norms. We have rushed to register and classify them and provide them with necessary services. A national task force has been established to begin the registration process. We call on UNHCR to allocate emergency budget funds to enable us to provide necessary services to those refugees.

The Acting Co-Chair: I now call on His Excellency Mr. Edward Nalbandian, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Armenia.

Mr. Nalbandian (Armenia): The convening of this meeting at such a high level indicates the growing prominence of the problem of migrants and refugees on the global agenda, including within the United Nations system, as well as a strong determination to tackle it.

Armenia has been facing the challenges relating to hosting refugees for almost three decades. In the late 1980s and the beginning of 1990s, Armenians were

massacred and expelled from their homes in Azerbaijan and found refuge in Armenia. This year again, in early April, Azerbaijan unleashed another large-scale military aggression against Nagorno Karabakh, accompanied by gross violations of international humanitarian law, which resulted in a number of casualties among civilians and another wave of displacement.

In that context, we would like to stress the significance of addressing the root causes of large movements of people by working to prevent conflicts and crisis situations and to promote the peaceful settlement of disputes and the achievement of long-term political solutions. Likewise, we would like to highlight the importance of providing equal, prompt and unhindered access to international humanitarian assistance for refugees and displaced persons in all affected parts of the world, without distinctions based on their current political status.

Armenia is deeply concerned by the situation in our immediate neighbourhood, the Middle East. On numerous occasions, Armenia has condemned the crimes committed by Da'esh and other terrorist groups, which threaten the people of the region and beyond. The war in Syria has had a devastating impact on its civilian population, including national and religious minorities, who face existential threats as a result of identity-based crimes perpetrated by terrorists and foreign fighters. The violence in the Middle East has not spared Syrian-Armenians, many of whom have lost their lives in terrorist attacks. Their Armenian settlements, churches, schools and cultural institutions have been destroyed.

One hundred years ago, Armenian refugees found shelter in many Arab countries after the Armenian genocide. Today, thousands of Armenians, together with other people from the Middle East, are again forced to abandon their places of residence. From Syria alone, more than 20,000 Armenians have found refuge in Armenia, making our country the third-largest recipient of Syrian refugees in Europe on a per capita basis.

We therefore have first-hand knowledge of what it means to be a refugee and to host refugees. The challenges of receiving, accommodating and integrating refugees from Syria are high on the agenda of the Armenian Government. We have been offering a variety of protection options, including accelerated asylum procedures and facilitated provision of residence permits and naturalization. The State supports refugees in setting up businesses and provides durable housing, free medical assistance and scholarships.

Armenia is committed to doing its utmost to address the issues of Syrian refugees. However, no one State can manage such large movements on its own. We believe that greater international cooperation is needed to assist host countries. To that end, we welcome the adoption of the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants (resolution 71/1) and believe that the full implementation of our collective commitments, particularly those referring to more equitable burden- and responsibility-sharing, could make a real difference for the benefit of refugees.

The Acting Co-Chair: I now give the floor to the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic.

Mr. Mounzer (Syria) (*spoke in Arabic*): The attention of all countries, be they countries of origin or destination, is now being drawn to the phenomenon of migration in all its aspects, for it is a matter that concerns all of the peoples of the world. That has prompted Member States to establish a number of international bodies, such as the International Organization for Migration and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, and to adopt dozens of resolutions and agreements that highlight the importance of the refugee and migration phenomenon.

Addressing the increasing movements of refugees and migrants requires objective research into all of the aspects and impacts of that phenomenon throughout the world. We should not confine ourselves to a certain region. We should not ignore refugees and migrants from any part of the world. We should stress the fact that research into this phenomenon demands respect for the basic rights granted to refugees, wherever they are, without any discrimination.

The delegation of Syria would like to express its concerns with regard to the contents of the outcome document of today's high-level meeting (resolution 71/1), in particular where it refers to the World Humanitarian Summit in Istanbul in May 2016 and to the outcomes, documents and commitments resulting from that conference. We stress that we do not accept the outcomes of that conference, as the Turkish authorities refused the participation of the delegation from Syria. The Turkish action represents a precedent that cannot be condoned when organizing United Nations conferences, especially given the fact that Syria had announced its participation in that conference.

The Secretariat must ensure that the host countries of such conferences do not prevent other countries from attending.

My delegation also expresses concern with regard to paragraph 19 of the outcome document of today's high-level meeting in its entirety, where reference is made to conferences on Syrian refugees. Given the fact that the outcome document addresses a general issue, it should cover all countries and not a specific country. The fact is that refugees and migrants are flowing into all parts of the world and that there are also people who are migrating because of natural circumstances. In discussing the so-called influx of Syrian refugees and migrants, one should bear in mind that Syrians represent only 20 per cent of that influx, while others are coming from African and Asian countries, sometimes holding forfeited Syrian passports.

The main causes and reasons behind the migration in the Middle East are terrorism by Da'esh and the Al-Nusra Front and other terrorist organizations, the continued Israeli occupation of Palestine, external interference in the internal affairs of the countries of the region and the unilateral course of economic procedures — for example, the brain drain and the looting of countries' resources, which deprives them of their riches. We in Syria deplore the circumstances imposed on Syrians as they flee terrorism, and we hope that all Syrians will be able to return to their country and contribute to the rebuilding of Syria together with their brothers and sisters.

While we recognize the genuine efforts made by some countries to host Syrians, we reject any attempts to take advantage of those who have left Syria by using them and their plight for political games or as pawns in a competition to see who can take in the most people. We call on the international community to bear its responsibility to address that phenomenon and bring an end to the presence and activities of foreign terrorist fighters in Syria.

In conclusion, my delegation asserts that in order to find a solution to the Syrian refugee and migrant crisis, urgent work is required on several tracks.

First, terrorism targeting the Syrian people must be brought to an end. It must be made incumbent upon all of the countries of the world that fund, shelter, train and arm those terrorists, attack by air and land the sovereignty of my country and facilitate their entrance into Syria to stop doing so and to implement the resolutions of the Security Council.

Secondly, the unilateral course of measures imposed against Syria by some countries must also be brought to an end. Such measures undermine the livelihoods of Syrians, compelling citizens to leave the country in search of a better life, which causes them to fall prey to organized crime groups and human traffickers and smugglers.

Thirdly, efforts should be made to find a peaceful political solution to the Syrian crisis on the basis of a national dialogue among Syrians, away from any pressures or external agendas.

The Acting Co-Chair: I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Khemaies Jhinaoui, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Tunisia.

Mr. Jhinaoui (Tunisia) (*spoke in Arabic*): May I begin by extending our thanks to the President of the General Assembly for holding this important high-level meeting on the matter of refugees and internally displaced persons, as well as migrants. This is a time to take a deeper international look at phenomena of that type. Our thanks go in particular to Mr. Peter Thomson, President of the General Assembly at its seventy-first session. I would like to wish him every success in carrying out his duties. The same goes to Mr. Lykketoft for everything he did as President of the General Assembly at its seventieth session.

The matter of refugees and migrants is well known across the globe. It requires that we find a comprehensive vision as a basis for solutions, bearing in mind the importance of migration as a factor contributing to development, a vision in which people can place their trust.

From the very first years of its independence, Tunisia has sought to uphold human rights and is highly interested in the topic we are discussing. Over the course of the years, we have seen a large flow of refugees and migrants fleeing conflicts in Libya. We have hosted those refugees and migrants and continue to do so to date. I am referring to hundreds of thousands of Libyans, as well as Syrians, who are experiencing great difficulty. We have stood alongside the Libyan people and have always made it clear that we stand ready to apply the Libyan Political Agreement for national reconciliation in addition to tackling all relevant issues, in particular, ending the actions of terrorist groups and their political and economic impacts on the country. Again, this is a matter of promoting the unity of Libya, combating human trafficking and halting its consequences for neighbouring countries.

Allow me highlight the plight of Palestinian refugees. It is very important that their suffering

be alleviated. We stand ready to provide them with protection pursuant to all relevant human rights laws.

Over the past year, Tunisia has received more than 1,000 refugees displaced by war, including individuals who arrived by boat, among other means. Developing countries are particularly affected by, and bear the brunt of, the crisis. In that connection, I would like to emphasize the suffering of the hundreds of Tunisians who have lost their lives. It is important for those individuals to be recognized, because they lost their lives along the coast of Italy. Some of them are still missing, and we have no information on their whereabouts. We are now implementing a national strategy, one seeking to ensure safe and orderly migration so as to ensure that migrants' rights are upheld and individuals are protected against illegal migration activities. That requires a policy to address the root causes of migration, so as to ensure development and dignity for people and better livelihoods.

The outcomes of the 2016 World Humanitarian Summit in Istanbul should provide the guidelines for a sound policy and an international partnership on the matter of refugees and migrants. We pay tribute to the outcome document of today's meeting on the matter of large movements of refugees and migrants (resolution 71/1), which should serve as the basis for reviewing States' policies with respect to migrants and refugees, in line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

I would like to emphasize the need to consider the root causes of the mass displacement of persons. That requires ensuring the peaceful settlement of conflicts while upholding human rights and ensuring that the Sustainable Development Goals are achieved, pursuant to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. That should be done through the close linkage between peace and security and by taking on board the interests of countries of both origin and destination.

The Acting Co-Chair: I now call on His Excellency Mr. Thorbjørn Jagland, Secretary-General of the Council of Europe.

Mr. Jagland (Council of Europe): I will be speaking today about Europe and its neighbourhood on behalf of the Council of Europe, a 47-member intergovernmental organization that is the guardian of the European Convention on Human Rights.

The European Convention on Human Rights clearly states that everyone who sets foot on European soil, regardless of origin, whether legal or illegal, enjoys certain basic rights. But such rights are not sufficient in the current situation. Cooperation among the 47 member States is very much needed, and without cooperation member States will push problems onto each other. Unfortunately, that has already begun, and it will only exacerbate the problems we face.

Children must be at the top of our concerns. I urge this high-level meeting to agree on meaningful action on refugees and migrants, including the effective protection and relocation of those arriving on European soil and an end to detention. Children should not be detained in detention centres; they should be in school. Access to accommodation, in particular for children who are travelling to the European continent alone — unaccompanied minors — is a source of concern. They must have the right to reunite with their families. We are aware that many who arrive on the European continent already have relatives present and that they should have the right to reunite with their families. Unfortunately, European legislation is making that increasingly difficult. Children should have the right to attend school, regardless of their status — whether legal or illegal migrants — because all children have the right to go to school and to live in decent conditions.

I would like to add a few brief points in that regard, because children are the most vulnerable, and end with the following. I do not believe that the world has understood the depth of the crisis that we face. Of course, the crisis in Europe's neighbourhood is an unbelievable one. It is also utterly unbelievable that the war in Syria continues to rage in the twenty-first century. The world is better organized than ever before, yet it appears to be more chaotic. It is increasingly dangerous, as what we are witnessing in Europe is leading to more extreme attitudes on the European continent. We are now witnessing a very dangerous situation, and we do not understand the real consequences of the situation if we are unable to end it.

I do not have a solution to the crisis, but we can alleviate the problems of those affected. Unfortunately, United Nations organizations such as the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the World Food Programme are underfunded. In the midst of the crisis, the World Food Programme had to decrease its supply of food to camps in Jordan. What

we can do is to actually fund the European Union organizations properly.

The Acting Co-Chair: I now call on His Excellency Mr. Dominique Prince de la Rochefoucauld-Montbel, Minister of Health and International Cooperation of the Sovereign Order of Malta.

Mr. De la Rochefoucauld-Montbel (Sovereign Order of Malta): The question is not why people migrate. They have always done so. But today's migrations are an explosion in the movements of peoples, an explosion of humanitarian problems. How can we, the international community, effectively meet the challenge of the more than 244 million people on the move, more than 65 million internally displaced persons and refugees, and more than 6 million people stranded?

The vocation of the Order of Malta, a sovereign and religious entity under public international law, has always been to care for the vulnerable people of society. Today in particular, the vulnerable we support are migrants and refugees, and we do so by providing aid along the Balkan route, as well as housing and assimilation assistance in a number of European countries, by saving lives in the Mediterranean Sea and the Aegean Sea and by implementing development programmes in the migration countries of origin.

At the World Humanitarian Summit, held in Istanbul on 23 and 24 May, the Order of Malta affirmed those commitments, which are in line with the conclusions of the outcome document, entitled "Commitments to Action", namely, "to work differently to meet and reduce people's humanitarian needs". We emphasized that faith-based organizations and religious institutions also had a special role to play in the field of humanitarian assistance for refugees, displaced people and migrants. We therefore applaud the inclusion of the role of faith-based institutions in the outcome document and its annexes of this high-level meeting (resolution 71/1).

We know that there are widely differing causes of migration: war, religious or racial persecution, climate change and the search for economic and social opportunities. Those drivers of migration demand global cooperation — a consistent, coordinated approach at both the international and the national levels.

Politicians must play a responsible role and explain to their constituents the benefits of migrants and refugees as an indispensable resource for economic growth. We call for development programmes that cover extended time periods, complemented by emergency aid for immediate suffering. We call for adequate funding for the humanitarian and development aspects of the problem. In order to respond to the challenge, the recommendations of the World Humanitarian Summit on bridging the humanitarian development gap must be implemented.

How can it be that in a world that produces $78 trillion in gross domestic product, we cannot together agree to allocate and administer $15 billion for humanitarian aid, which is the target set by the World Humanitarian Summit? Immediate action for refugees and migrants requires that we organize the integration of refugees and migrants, so that they become an asset. We must continue to save lives along migration routes, emphasize and foster respect for human rights, draw attention to the living conditions in so-called safe houses, which often include sexual exploitation and slavery, and create work in refugee camps for adults and organize schooling for bored and directionless youth.

If we do not agree on those priorities as a united international community, we risk the radicalization of people through idleness and the production of a generation of millions of unassimilated and unskilled people. Immediate action is urgently needed on the part of States and international organizations, action aimed at opening safe and legal paths to enter developed countries. At the same time there must be work towards cohesion in industrialized countries' policies on migration, to develop resettlement and relocation opportunities and to dignify reception capabilities. Projects must be implemented in the migrants' countries of origin and transit and induce people to settle. Populist attitudes and policies of fear must be discouraged, and consideration must be given to how the international media could cooperate in that effort. The fight against traffickers and smugglers of human beings must be intensified, and, finally, migration must be dealt with as a foreign policy issue and not a border security issue.

What we are facing is but a beginning — from local migration to global, from global migration to massive country migrations. To be successful, we must challenge global indifference, fear and welfare selfishness. We, the Sovereign Order of Malta, actively support the task of the United Nations and the international community, namely, to offer migrants and refugees a better world.

The Acting Co-Chair: I now call on the Envoy of the Secretary-General of the League of Arab States on Humanitarian Affairs and Relief, Sheikha Hessa Al Thani.

Sheikha Al Thani (League of Arab States) (*spoke in Arabic*): I have the pleasure to participate in this high-level meeting of the General Assembly to discuss one of the most dangerous and important problems in our world today, which is a real concern and a real challenge, especially in our Arab region. Of course we are talking about the large-scale movements of refugees and migrants.

The League of Arab States has sought to participate in a positive and effective manner in international forums, especially those concerned with migration and refugees, by offering a unified Arab vision. We prepared for this important meeting by holding an extraordinary meeting among ourselves to discuss migration in cooperation with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the International Organization for Migration and with the participation of Ms. Karen AbuZayd, Special Adviser of the Secretary-General on the Summit on Addressing Large Movements of Refugees and Migrants. The meeting, held at the League of Arab States headquarters in Cairo, produced outcomes that included a focus on the need to devise solutions to the crises that have led to the increasing numbers of refugees and migrants. We need a unified vision in order to find solutions for those problems in a way that will ensure the affected countries' stability and security.

We also reaffirmed the right of Palestinian refugees to return, a right aligned with resolution 194 (III) of 1948. Especially for the Palestinian refugees in Syria, we need to provide support through the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East in order to ensure their dignity and well-being.

When it comes to assessing the root causes of migration, the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants (resolution 71/1) asserts that we need to provide opportunities for orderly, safe and regular migration. We also need to implement the Sustainable Development Goals. All of those measures will ensure that migration remains safe and regular, especially within the Arab world, through cooperation aimed at dealing with migration and refugee issues and displacements, given that all of those aspects of the problem have had repercussions. Especially in host communities, we need to cooperate and support countries that are affected by such movements, based on the principle of shared and differentiated responsibilities.

We also need to safeguard the human dignity of refugees and migrants. We need to fight discrimination, xenophobia and racism. The Declaration also commends the efforts of our countries and their contributions, either through the hosting of large numbers of refugees — 52 per cent of the refugees throughout the world are Palestinian — or through the provision of the necessary humanitarian assistance through donor conferences by calling on countries to share the burden and increase their support for refugees. When we discuss the future global compacts for sharing responsibility for refugees and for safe, regular and orderly migration, the Arab countries have reaffirmed that it is important to provide safe and legal opportunities for migrants that protect human rights and dignity and simplify procedures for visas.

We also need to integrate and mainstream migration into our development policies in order to meet the Sustainable Development Goals. Our Declaration also speaks to the need to address the precarious conditions of migrants and refugees. We must also look at the journey upon which they embark as they try to reach their destination countries. We have to ensure that their human rights are protected, irrespective of their legal status, because we all know that it is important to protect human dignity. That is extremely important, and we need to focus our attention on that issue in our various meetings, especially during this high-level meeting. We need to provide support to efforts to rescue irregular migrants in the Mediterranean and to provide those people with accommodations. We need to pay particular attention to women, youth, the elderly and people with disabilities.

We have agreed to place importance, during the closing ceremony of our meeting, on the global compact's call for a safe, regular and orderly migration. We have also agreed to continue with our regional consultations, so as to follow up on what will be agreed under the framework of the compact that will emerge from this high-level meeting. We also need to follow up on the results of the relevant agreements and on what the General Assembly will decide in that regard.

In conclusion, I would like to say that there is a great need to determine the proper ways in which to deal with

large movements of refugees and migrants, especially in the light of the current circumstances confronting the world, in particular the Arab region. That must entail adopting a human rights approach that can ensure and account for the protection of human rights, while preserving the dignity of migrants and refugees and taking into account the security of countries.

The Acting Co-Chair: I now call on Mr. Lamberto Zannier, Secretary General of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

Mr. Zannier (Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe): The international movement of people, a phenomenon as old as humankind, has become a deeply contentious issue, dividing rather than uniting our international community. That development is very unfortunate and must be reversed. We are meeting today at this milestone summit meeting to reject any form of manipulation of the issue of migration and to reaffirm the crucial role that it can play in the development of our societies.

We are also here to underscore the responsibilities of the international community in general for the protection of refugees and the human rights of all. The international movement of people is a defining feature of our interconnected world. We cannot address it as if it were a temporary phenomenon, nor can we exclusively focus on the current emergency. We need to combine a renewed impetus on the humanitarian side with a strategic approach tackling the root causes.

Conflict, poverty and the quest for a better life continue to be the lead drivers of migration. Yet the relative weight of each one and the profile of the people on the move are constantly changing. A growing number of them, many of whom are under age, are blurring the difference between refugees and migrants, since they come from countries suffering from devastating economic crises or the collapse of State structures.

In order to respond to changing realities, including the growing impact of climate change as a driver for migration, we will need to be able to devise new approaches. The mission of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) is to build bridges between countries within our diverse region and find ways to replace confrontation with dialogue. Our 57 States and 11 Mediterranean and Asian partners, including key countries of destination, transit and origin, have a clear stake in transforming the challenges posed by a large unregulated flow into an opportunity for mobilizing cooperation and solidarity.

Although we must acknowledge and address factors relating to migration, we cannot let migration become another fault line. We need to work together so as to ensure that human rights will be at the centre of our action. We also need to join forces so as to target those who exploit people on the move. The OSCE is proud of its contribution to the fight against organized crime, including the fight against human trafficking. An example of a contribution by a regional organization like the OSCE would be the commitment by all its members to incorporate international legislation — in particular the provisions of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, also known as the Palermo Convention, and its Protocols — as a significant step in the fight against human traffickers and smugglers.

But a long-term approach also aims at the successful integration of migrants and refugees. It is our plan to continue working in the area of migration labour policy reform that would support the expansion of legal channels. We are also committed to promoting tolerance and non-discrimination, including by building on our track record in dealing with national minorities.

It is my belief that States should seize the initiative and use today's momentum to set new global principles. As the largest regional arrangement under Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations, the OSCE stands ready to work together with other regional organizations and the United Nations to ensure the regional application of new global guidelines. As part of the follow-up to this high-level meeting, we can explore a road map in which regional organizations act as a gateway to globalization.

Mr. Rahming (Bahamas), Acting Co-Chair, took the Chair.

The Acting Co-Chair: I now call on Mr. Yves Leterme, Secretary-General of the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance.

Mr. Leterme (International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance): At the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance — the only intergovernmental organization with an exclusive mandate on democracy — we are convinced that the international community should address three priorities.

First of all, we must meet the immediate needs of the millions of migrants and refugees on the move. They are refugees, they are migrants, but most of all, they are women and men, children and youth whose lives are at risk and whose future is jeopardized because of insufficient international responses. Secondly, we must address the root causes of the violent conflicts and the conditions of poverty at the base of the flows of migrants and refugees. Member States of the United Nations should turn the commitments adopted today into reality. Thirdly, we must jointly promote an effective counternarrative that demystifies the lies of populism and identifies the opportunities that the current crisis provides our societies.

A few years before the Second World War, the Italian politician and philosopher, Antonio Gramsci, wrote in his *Prison Notebooks*:

> "The crisis consists precisely in the fact that the old is dying and the new cannot be born; in this interregnum a great variety of morbid symptoms appear."

Today, we truly do live in a time of such morbid symptoms. The dangers of inaction are real. Against that background and in line with Hannah Arendt's analysis, why should refugees be considered the stateless, rightless scum of the earth?

As noted by many speakers today, the current crisis stems from civil wars and violent conflicts that the international community has not yet been able to address and resolve. We are witnessing unprecedented flows of about 65 million refugees and migrants. They include both people escaping wars and those who cannot cope with autocratic rule or extreme poverty. The interlinkages between violent extremism, fundamentalism and the scourge of international terrorism pose serious security threats. The rise of populism in established democracies, at a time of protracted economic setbacks, is an indicator of the closing down of public spaces in which the prevailing narrative is one of fear, anger and intolerance.

Opportunistic and cynical politicians stake their electoral fortunes on riding petty nationalism and xenophobic feelings. Indeed, migrants and refugees become the culprits of all that goes wrong. They are turned into a threat to a supposedly comfortable status quo. Many Governments pursue easy ways out of the crisis, including the adoption of legislation that, in the name of security, risks contradicting long-held human rights commitments.

In the span of a few years, many countries have seen bridge-building rhetoric replaced by policies prompted by narrow-minded, short-term electoral concerns. Their results are plain to see — the proliferation of new walls reminiscent of the shaken foundations of twentieth-century international relations and realpolitik agreements aimed at curbing movements and flows, even at the cost of compromising certain human rights standards. We should reverse such worrisome trends.

As history has shown over and over again, migration is not a threat to nation-States, let alone democracies, but intolerance and hatred undoubtedly are. The common objective of the international community ought to be to build a future for the next generations, not to combat migrants, refugees and asylum-seekers. We need the wisdom to collectively question short-term solutions that produce negligible results at huge human costs and bring about immense long-term social, economic and political damage and human suffering.

Together we need to build a new vision that places the energy and potential of today's migrants and refugees within the framework of tomorrow's unfolding development outcomes, as envisaged in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The Acting Co-Chair: I now give the floor to Mr. Saber Chowdhury, President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union.

Mr. Chowdhury (Inter-Parliamentary Union): Millions of people are on the move within their own countries and across borders. More than ever before, a great number of those people are not just seeking a better life; they are literally running for their lives, fearing persecution, starvation, devastation, destitution and torture. We have a real emergency on our hands that will only grow worse if we do not take decisive action. We are past the time for small, reluctant, tentative steps. A long-range, long-term coordinated and multidimensional solution grounded in human rights is needed.

Migrants and refugees are among the most vulnerable people in the world. By virtue of their transient status, they also lack a political voice, as they do not get to vote or participate in politics. That places a special and particular responsibility on members of parliament, as representatives of the people, to listen carefully, not

only to the concerns of the host communities but also to the migrants themselves. Beyond that, parliamentarians must ensure that international law is upheld, particularly when it comes to the obligations of States to receive and assist refugees and asylum-seekers.

The New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants adopted today (resolution 71/1) certainly goes in the right direction. I am very pleased to see very strong convergence and coming together, in terms of the overall approach and specific policy prescriptions, between that Declaration and the one that the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) adopted during its Assembly at this time last year, in Geneva, following a four-day debate on the moral and economic imperatives that call for fairer, smarter and more humane migration. We certainly have much in common that we can build upon.

Like members of the Assembly, members of parliament would, for the most part, like to see a shift in the way that migrants and refugees are seen: no longer as a burden, but as a responsibility to be shared; not just as a cost, but as an economic opportunity for the host countries and local communities; not only as an issue of border controls, but as one of orderly settlement and social integration; no longer as a threat to national identity, but as a chance to embrace and celebrate diversity as a principle of human interaction in a globalized world.

We must work together — Governments, parliaments and civil society — to change the negative narrative about migration that pervades public culture and the media. We must stand firm against all expressions of xenophobia, racism and discrimination and in favour of the realization of the human rights of migrants. We also must pay special attention to intersecting forms of discrimination that some migrants or refugees face, in particular discrimination based on their nationality, ethnicity or sex, both in national laws and in practice.

Migrant women and children are at particular risk of exploitation and abuse. Disregard for their specific needs and for those of disabled migrants may lead to other forms of discrimination, in addition to the frequent prejudice against migrants and refugees. Above all, we must have a common understanding of what it will take to manage migration more effectively, including by combating its root causes, such as conflict, poverty, natural disasters and climate change, to mention only the most obvious ones.

Undoing the drivers of migration in the countries of origin is not easy. Nor is it easy for receiving countries with high unemployment, stagnant economies and incomes and strained budgets to be more receptive to migrant workers and refugees. The good news is that the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which came into effect this year, provide us with all the guidance we need to connect the dots at the policy level and to build common ground among all concerned. If we take decisive action to implement the comprehensive framework of the SDGs to fight poverty, restore political stability and shore up the environment, more people will be able to live in their own countries in full security and freedom, with the hope of a better life for themselves and their children. Implementing the SDGs will also enable host countries to effectively integrate migrants into their societies and economies.

The Inter-Parliamentary Union is determined to make a strong contribution on this front by helping parliaments institutionalize the SDGs through capacity-building and policy advice. Going forward, the SDGs will loom large in our strategic planning and in our very close partnership with the United Nations. As part of this work, we will be building on a recent handbook for parliamentarians on migration, human rights and governance that was produced together with the International Labour Organization and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.

As usual, when it comes to agreements such as the one adopted today, much will depend on the political will to implement what has been agreed. That is where, once again, parliamentarians will be critical. It is perhaps the main reason why this year's General Assembly resolution on the interaction between the United Nations, national parliaments and the IPU (resolution 70/298) invites the IPU and the United Nations to work together in supporting Governments to facilitate the orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people, including through the implementation of planned and well-managed migration.

We look forward to working with the General Assembly to advance that critical issue based on our shared vision of the road ahead.

The Acting Co-Chair: I now call on His Excellency Mr. Elhadj As Sy, Secretary General of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.

Mr. As Sy (International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies): In recent days, we have talked a lot about refugees and migrants. These are not identities; rather, they are situations in which so many people find themselves due to circumstances far beyond their control, situations where people are trying to flee from home because home is no longer safe.

But today home is not only unsafe for the people who live there. It is also unsafe for many others who are there to try to provide help and support. On the way to this room just now, I received the devastating news that the staff and volunteers who had been so proudly celebrating the fact that, this morning, they had finally arrived in Aleppo, had been bombed. Fourteen of them lost their lives, bringing the total number to 65, which is totally unacceptable.

Today, then, we ask the world leaders to seize the opportunity presented by this summit to act together to stop the death and suffering of those who leave their homes in the very human pursuit of safety, dignity and a future for their children. Maybe we should also call on everybody to start at the beginning, which would be to stop the war, stop the violence and stop all the situations that are pushing people out of their homes.

States bear the responsibility for protecting the lives, well-being and dignity of migrants, regardless of their legal status. The National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies around the world are ready to do their part to help to support them. But we must set our collective goals higher. Today, far too many people are dying on their journeys. They are drowning in the sea — as we often see — collapsing in the desert — as we do not see — suffocating in car trunks or crowded trucks — which we often read about in the media. Unaccompanied children are disappearing. Without access to reliable and credible information, people fall victim to human traffickers. They are preyed upon by gangs and held and abused in illegal camps. This, again, is unacceptable.

It is a stain on our shared humanity, as is the indifference that too often greets their suffering. We call on States to take all necessary steps to ensure that migrants can travel in safety and dignity to protect themselves against accidents, attacks, exploitation and abuse, against having their families split apart. We call on States to ensure that they have access to health care, legal advice, food and shelter while they are on the move. They also need access to information to help them make timely and informed decisions along their migration route.

Once they reach their destination, we call on host States to uphold the rights of all migrants under international and national law and, in particular, to ensure that rights related to asylum and refugee protection are fully respected. We also ask that their social integration be facilitated and that they be protected from discrimination, stigmatization and xenophobia.

We must work together to change the increasingly frightening narrative about migrants. Various points of view about migrants may be legitimate, but xenophobia and racism are not. Discrimination and violence cannot be tolerated and should be called out for what they are. On this point, we look to States for their leadership and commitment.

Finally, we pledge our support. The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, through the 190 national societies and 17 million volunteers on the ground, is present at all points along the migration routes: in countries of origin, transit and destination. We see the daily suffering and indignity that is the reality for too many people. We pledge to continue our work to protect and assist women, children and men who are forced out of their countries around the world, regardless of their legal status, because, indeed, no human being is illegal.

The Acting Co-Chair: I now call on Her Excellency Ms. Michaëlle Jean, Secretary General of the International Organization of la Francophonie.

Ms. Jean (International Organization of la Francophonie) (*spoke in French*): As I listened this morning to testimonies and statements about the situations forcing thousands of women, men, young people and children to flee, I assure those who are present that this brings back painful memories for me.

For me, it is not a question of statistics, figures or data, but a chapter in my life, because I was once there. As a child, I experienced this difficult ordeal with my parents, like hundreds of thousands of Haitian families who had to leave everything behind in a situation of total insecurity, then take the road to exile with nothing to their name in order to escape the repression, daily violence and extreme poverty under the bloody and corrupt dictatorial regime of François Duvalier.

Every day I think how fortunate my family and I were to emerge alive from that nightmare. And how

lucky we were to find asylum in Canada, where we could rebuild our lives and become full citizens. Who could know that one day the little refugee I was would be called upon to occupy the highest office in Canada, that of Governor General and Commander-in-Chief, and today the office of the Secretary General of the International Organization of la Francophonie?

Nevertheless, every day, knowing where I have come from, I think about the hundreds of thousands of my fellow Haitians, whose bodies were crushed by repression or who perished at sea. I think of those who still face the worst conditions as they are driven by despair, and who are only cold, anonymous statistics, classified in the refugee/migrant column. I do not have enough time here to share all the reasons that led us to flee, and the strength we survivors needed to recover from our wounds, start over from scratch and rebuild our lives elsewhere.

We arrived dispossessed, it is true, but we were still rich from all that we were and from our courage and determination. We survivors continuously ask ourselves whether our stories and our suffering will be told. Here, echoing my own story, I am thinking of these millions of persons who are frightened and forever traumatized today, at this very moment. I am thinking about these millions of children who make up more than half of all refugees, displaced persons and migrants. And all of this is happening before our very eyes.

We need a humanist approach that respects the dignity and fundamental rights of persons. We must also adopt a multilateral, comprehensive, concerted, cooperative, coherent and responsible approach. Let us look reality in the face and ask ourselves why in 2015, for the first time in the history of the United Nations, we saw more than 65 million people forcibly displaced. Why were more than 1 million refugees and migrants in 2015 willing to confront the desert and the Mediterranean Sea in order to try to reach Europe at the cost of their lives? This year is already the most deadly yet because we have not acted quickly enough.

We must act and address the root causes of migration and their tragic manifestations alike. To address the root causes, the International Organization of La Francophonie (IOF), which I represent, is doing that. The 85 States and organizations that are members of our organization on five continents include countries of origin, transit, destination and, ultimately, host countries. This reveals how thoroughly the situation touches us all and how all its facets draw our attention every day.

We are not standing idle; we are acting. In addition to our education and training programmes, we have programmes to strengthen the capacity of communities. We support entrepreneurship and job creation programmes for women and young people in the context of a vibrant economic strategy to help the countries most affected by these mass exoduses of persons. We are sparing no effort. For example, in 12 sub-Saharan French-speaking countries we are building incubator programmes to enhance the capacities of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises and industries, which are engines of growth and create jobs. We must create reasons to hope. We must create opportunities and open doors. We must upend the sense of hopelessness, of a future without hope or power, felt by so many young people and women. These support programmes are essential to the most vulnerable countries in the francophone world in adapting to the devastating effects of climate change.

The International Organization of La Francophonie is also firmly committed to preventing conflict, rebuilding and strengthening peace, entrenching democracy and the rule of law and ensuring respect for rights and freedoms and for cultural and religious diversity. What we all have in common is the shared sense of urgency. We know that these large movements of refugees and migrants are not just a passing phase. In this globalized world, we must live and act jointly, with a shared responsibility, ethically and, of course, effectively. Beyond our confusion over the issue of forced displacement and those left behind, it is our joint responsibility to tackle this phenomenon relentlessly as we see all this suffering, indifference and everyone in it for themselves and isolated from each other — all so pathetic and illusory in our world without borders.

We must act urgently in brotherhood and solidarity to revive our traditions of hospitality and to get to know and understand each other better. It is also our common responsibility to counter with all our energy hate speech, xenophobic biases and extremist movements fed by populism and extreme nationalism that are manipulated for purely electoral gain to fuel fear of the other and the rejection of the foreign. In the short term, we are jointly responsible to consider both long- and short-term migratory policies based on burden-sharing and international cooperation. This must be a win-win exchange. Rather than erect walls or unroll and set up

barbed wire, we should invest in sustainable economic development. IOF adds its voice to that end.

As I commend this first United Nations high-level summit to address large movements of refugees and migrants, rejoice at seeing us all here together and welcome the adoption of the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants, I see how determined we are to mobilize all our efforts and actions. But I would like to know that we will work in a complementary way and take into account in an inclusive, significant and coordinated way existing initiatives and those that are yet to come, in a full spirit of partnership with and alongside populations. We cannot continue to act each on our own and to see so many resources go to waste because we lack coordination.

It is in that spirit that we are approaching all these international partnerships and come here to the United Nations to sound a warning of the urgent need to re-examine our actions in a entirely new way and harmonize our work so that we can better answer the needs of the populations at risk, who place their trust in us. Let us be remember that history will judge us.

The Acting Co-Chair: I now give the floor Ms. Irene Khan, Director-General of the International Development Law Organization.

Ms. Khan (International Development Law Organization): As the head of the world's only intergovernmental organization exclusively devoted to advancing the rule of law and development, I am honoured to address this high-level meeting.

We need no reminder of the urgency of the refugee and migration crisis or the intensity of human suffering. What we do need is to recall that their plight is a direct consequence of the failure to uphold the rule of law, human rights and humanitarian norms — the failure of institutions to protect and of the powerful to muster the political will to find solutions. Men, women and children are risking their lives to flee persecution, war and poverty and build a new future for themselves. But when abroad, they confront inequality and injustice. They are neither able to return home safely nor integrate into new societies with dignity and rights.

Sadly, in far too many countries, refugees and migrants are being demonized and criminalized for short-term political gains. Citizens' fears are being manipulated to create a climate of suspicion, mistrust, xenophobia and racism. Far too often, those fleeing terror are being deliberately confused with those who are suspected of generating terror. Just because refugees and migrants do not have documents does not mean that they do not have rights. The rule of law, properly understood and applied, ensures that all people are equal and entitled to equal protection, no matter who they are or where, uprooted or at home.

Refugee and migration issues do not exist in a legal vacuum. The conventions, treaties, norms and laws are well established but, regrettably, not well respected. There is an enormous deficit of commitment, compliance and capacity.

The New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants (resolution 71/1) is an important and timely reminder that the international legal framework constructed with great care over the past century provides a solid basis for protecting the rights of people on the move and for finding solutions to their plight. The legal architecture provides the foundation on the basis of which the two distinct global compacts for refugees and migrants must be constructed.

The New York Declaration is only a first step, and what follows will be critical. As the international community moves forward, the International Development Law Organization (IDLO) wishes to underline three key points.

First, there must be no compromise on the rule of law. Shortchanging legal norms today will only store up problems for tomorrow.

Secondly, development and humanitarian assistance must work in tandem, not in sequence, to help support people on the move at a much earlier stage. False lines make no sense in a world where borders can no longer hold people back and where globalization is creating new opportunities and threats that require global, comprehensive responses.

Thirdly, investing in the rule of law is an integral part of sustainable development, as the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1) has made clear. By strengthening institutions, the rule of law ensures justice and accountability. By empowering people, it helps to build resilient societies. The more Governments and the international community invest in the rule of law, the better equipped they will be to protect and assist refugees, migrants and displaced persons.

The marriage between the United Nations and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) acknowledges the need for new thinking and new partnerships. The rule of law provides an opportunity for the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the IOM and Member States to be bold and innovative while remaining rights-centred and people-focused. IDLO stands ready to work with all concerned to identify solutions that protect and empower refugees, migrants and displaced persons.

The Acting Co-Chair: I now give the floor to Mr. Emmanuel Roux, Special Representative of the International Criminal Police Organization.

Mr. Roux (International Criminal Police Organization): First, I want to thank Ambassador Thomson, President of the General Assembly, for hosting this timely event and also commend the tremendous work done by his predecessor and by Jordan and Ireland as facilitators.

Given the current large-scale refugee displacements, it is now more than ever time to face the difficult realities. INTERPOL, as the only global police cooperation organization, is committed to helping the States Members of the United Nations to do so. In June 2016, intelligence gathered through INTERPOL's operation Intercops Spartacus III led to the arrest of 18 suspects about to smuggle victims between Colombia and Ecuador, in abysmal conditions. The victims rescued included pregnant women and young infants, several requiring urgent medical attention. The operation also dismantled a human-trafficking network that trafficked hundreds of women and girls from South America to Asia with fake identification documents. These are not isolated incidents, but, rather, what illegal and irregular migration is: an industry run by organized criminal groups that generate huge earnings, with an average profit of $5 billion to $6 billion a year, which can fuel terrorism and serious transnational crime.

The 13 November 2015 Paris attacks have also shown us that terrorists will use opportunistic social crises such as migration to achieve their goals. One of the suicide bombers entered Europe as part of a large influx of refugees, registering at a refugee camp before making his way to Paris.

Given these examples, our response to large movements of refugees and migrants should be two-pronged: it must include improving migration management to mitigate risks such as people-smuggling, human trafficking, sexual exploitation and crimes against children, and must dismantle the criminal smuggling networks behind illegal immigration. But just as important, our response must also address the root causes of destabilization, forced displacement and irregular migration. INTERPOL can assist on both fronts, but, in the interests of time, I will focus only on the first.

INTERPOL's strategy, endorsed by the European Union and the African Union, deals with the risks of irregular migration and focuses on equipping States Members of the United Nations with the tools, the skills and the operational know-how to disrupt the criminal networks responsible. INTERPOL leads two working groups on this issue. The first is a human trafficking experts group and the other is a specialized operational network against migrant smuggling. We have developed a handbook for border management in West Africa and combined this capacity-building with official trainings and live operations.

In addition, one of the key ways to fight irregular migration is stronger border security. INTERPOL's database of stolen and lost travel documents contains 54 million documents, enabling border-control officers to immediately check if invalid or forged travel documents are being used for illegal cross-border movements.

INTERPOL policing capabilities have proved to greatly benefit member countries in the fight against irregular migration, but in order to do our work efficiently we need the strong political backing of States. Our readily available tools are at the disposal of all States to mitigate the security and crime-related risks that come with such large movements of people, which in turn protects migrants and refugees.

The Acting Co-Chair: I now give the floor to Mr. Patrick Gomes, Secretary General of the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States.

Mr. Gomes (African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States): The 79 States members of the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) Group welcome this timely and relevant summit on migration. The ACP-European Union (EU) Cotonou Agreement provides for an ongoing dialogue on migratory flows that is jointly pursued to address the issues of the protection of human rights, non-discrimination, the treatment of third-country nationals and strategies to reduce poverty — the basic issues of the ACP-EU dialogue on migration.

The upheavals and sheer numbers of forced movements of people and the attendant humanitarian crises over the past two decades require measures to overcome the negative aspects while strengthening the benefits of migration. This implies attention to multiple drivers of migration — political, economic, social and environmental. Political drivers, for instance, stem from the prevalence of conflict, wars, persecution and violation of human rights. These contribute to dire consequences for vulnerable populations, particularly women and children, the aged and the disabled.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development underscores the imperatives of peace and security as enablers of sustainable development. Building peaceful, cohesive and secure societies is therefore a prerequisite for overcoming the structural causes of forced migration and internal displacement.

Economic drivers include financial instabilities, high rates of unemployment, especially among young people, and the lack of access to health care and other social services. These drivers give rise to growing poverty and inequality that in turn push people to migrate, using legal or illegal networks. From droughts to floods, climatic disasters give rise to climate refugees. The ACP Group supports global initiatives such as the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction aimed at mitigating risks of disaster and the consequent displacement of people.

Addressing such drivers of migration requires international solidarity through joint efforts to effectively implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Six Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and targets on migration allow for a systematic approach to the interrelated issues of linking migration, development and social transformation. Additionally, the situation of migrant workers is highlighted in SDG 8, on decent work for all, and should address reducing youth unemployment by promoting youth entrepreneurship.

ACP member States are partners to migration mechanisms that include the Khartoum and Rabat Processes, which formed the background to the Valletta Conference held under the aegis of the Africa-EU Partnership on Migration, Mobility and Employment, in November 2015. Every encouragement must be given to implement the Valletta Action Plan.

Academic and research mobility and the demands for needed skills in developed countries require well-defined strategies for cooperation between sending, transit and receiving countries. It is generally agreed that migration has demonstrated positive effects to both sending and receiving countries, with the latter receiving needed skills in their service sectors.

Many ACP States benefit significantly from remittances. In 2015, for instance, remittances to developing countries amounted to $432 billion, more than three times the official development assistance of that year. The ACP therefore reiterates its call for reduced banking transaction charges and acceptable correspondent banking arrangements to assist with remittances for developing countries. The ACP-EU dialogue on migration will continue to treat migration from a development perspective, recognizing that it needs to be addressed at its root causes, namely, poverty and the absence of economic opportunity.

In conclusion, the ACP reiterates its support for the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants (resolution 71/1) and calls for more action and less rhetoric. We remain optimistic that the adoption of the outcome of this meeting and the global compacts will be the continuation of positive, creative and balanced responses to migration that serve all of humankind, indeed all of us together.

The Acting Co-Chair: I now give the floor to Mr. Peter Maurer, President of the International Committee of the Red Cross.

Mr. Maurer (International Committee of the Red Cross): The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) welcomes this summit and the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants (resolution 71/1) adopted this morning. The Declaration commits States to treating every individual migrant and refugee with humanity. It also recalls the high standards of international law governing their protection and assistance.

That dual commitment to humanity and law is fundamental. Every day, in different parts of the world, the ICRC sees at first hand the suffering that pushes people to flee their homes in search of safety and living conditions where they are able to meet their basic needs. The majority of people who are forcibly displaced stay in their own countries and are therefore not refugees. The internally displaced, of whom there are 41 million today, have not crossed a State border. Most refugees are hosted in countries neighbouring the locations of today's armed conflicts.

A family's decision to leave is always tragic. People have lost so much. They are desperate. They no longer see any future in the place that has been their family's home for generations. Once they are forced to move, their journey's path is paved with insecurity. Migrants risk being detained. Families are separated. Relatives go missing. The initial tragedy meets more tragedy.

The truth is that unrestrained violence and violations of international humanitarian law are one of the main drivers of forced displacement. Parties to armed conflicts — be they State or non-State actors — attack indiscriminately, detain arbitrarily, torture, rape, forcibly displace millions of people, and unlawfully destroy homes, hospitals and schools. Or, as happened again, just this afternoon in Syria, they attack those who help, as illustrated by the brutal attack on a Syrian Arab Red Crescent convoy. The cumulative impact of such violence means that people may no longer be able to access basic services or maintain a sustainable livelihood.

In places not experiencing armed conflicts, chronic violence also triggers displacement. Homicide, sexual violence and intimidation force people to move and prevent investment in basic services and safe access to schools and clinics. To address the root causes of large-scale movements of migrants, we must therefore work together towards better respect for international humanitarian law, human rights law, refugee law and other legal frameworks that protect people from the effects of violence. And in responding to their needs, States must make sure the policies they pursue do not generate additional suffering. "Do no harm" is a critical principle.

Policymakers should listen to affected individuals and communities, and solutions ought to be found together. Otherwise, migrants will be pushed into situations of unnecessary dependency when what they need most, once their basic protection needs are met, is support in becoming or remaining self-reliant.

The ICRC and its partners in the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement are comprehensively engaged in humanitarian work with migrants at every stage of their journey. We have valuable knowledge, expertise and resources to inform State policy and practice in easing their suffering. We look forward to contributing this experience to the compacts that States will agree within the next two years.

The Acting Co-Chair: I now give the floor to Mr. Michael Spindelegger, Director General of the International Centre for Migration Policy Development.

Mr. Spindelegger (International Centre for Migration Policy Development): It has already been stated several times today that the international community is currently facing the worst refugee crisis since the Second World War. The exceptionally high numbers of people in need of protection also imply that no single country or small group of States can fulfil the obligation to protect, assist and integrate without broad international support. They also dash any hopes that States that do not engage solutions in the beginning will not have to do so at a later stage.

People will move on in search of safe places and humane conditions if they do not find them at their first refuge. And modern communications technology and means of transportation will help them reach destinations quite distant from immediate conflict zones. That is a lesson that European States had to learn during last year's long summer of migration.

But we must not forget that, despite the refugee crisis, the majority of migration flows still involve other types of movement, and it is safe to say that many sectors of the economies and societies both in countries of destination and origin would no longer function without the valuable contributions made by international migrants. However, too many of them have to reach their destinations in an irregular and dangerous way, are vulnerable to exploitation, work under inhumane conditions or face prejudice, xenophobia and discrimination. And all of this happens in a world that is increasingly interlinked and dependent on constant exchanges of talent, skills and know-how.

Today's challenges are global, and today's opportunities are too. The challenges require global responses based on joint responsibility, and the opportunities will be harnessed only when the vision of safe, orderly and regular migration becomes a realistic option for everyone.

The New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants (resolution 71/1) is a remarkable and crucial step in the development of a new and global framework for the protection of refugees and for managing migration better and more safely. It reflects a change in thinking whereby the protection of refugees and displaced people is no longer seen as a concern only for countries close to conflict or situated along migratory routes, but

as one that the global community has to respond to, act and support as a whole, regardless of where a crisis emerges. The Declaration also reflects new thinking when it stresses that such global responses must take into account the varying capacities and resources that States have at their disposal. None should stand aside altogether, but neither should any be overburdened.

Last but not least, the Declaration emphasizes an understanding of safe, orderly and regular migration as an asset not only for individual migrants and their families, but also for the States, economies and societies that benefit significantly from such movements.

Despite that, however, the Declaration can only be a first step towards reaching those goals, one that must be followed by many others if we are to protect those in need and relieve the countries currently bearing the brunt of the global refugee crisis.

It is a great achievement that the 193 States Members of the United Nations have worked together to make strong commitments regarding refugees and migrants and that they acknowledge their shared responsibility for managing migratory movements in a humane, sensitive, compassionate and people-centred manner, as called for by the Declaration. But the greatest achievement may lie in the fact that States Members of the United Nations will continue to take very concrete steps towards its practical implementation.

The adoption of global compacts on refugees and on safe, orderly and regular migration by 2018 will be living proof of Member States' ability to turn words into action and overcome the implementation gap. The next two years will be decisive in this regard, and the International Centre for Migration Policy Development stands ready to support its member States and all of its international friends and partners in that important process.

The Acting Co-Chair: I now call on His Excellency Mr. Iyad Ameen Madani, Secretary General of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation.

Mr. Madani (Organization of Islamic Cooperation): According to the most recent *Global Trends* report of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the 57 member States of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) have to grapple with around 37.7 million refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs), representing two thirds of the world's total. And, if we take into account one of the oldest conflict-and-refugee crises in the world, that involving the 5.2 million Palestinian refugees registered with the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, more than 70 per cent of the world's forcibly displaced people are from OIC member States.

The Islamic world has always been extremely generous in hosting refugees. That is not unusual, since generosity is an integral part of our Islamic traditions and values, which are totally compatible with the principles of our modern-day international refugee law. In that context, I would like to make eight brief points.

First, in order to end the suffering of millions of refugees, we have to be more effective in our quest to address the root causes of protracted refugee situations and to achieve durable solutions for them around the world. The humanitarian system cannot continue indefinitely paying the price for political failure to resolve conflicts.

Second, it is incumbent upon us to be more proactive in preventing and resolving crises before they get out of control.

Third, gaining access to and protecting refugees and IDPs continues to be a huge challenge in many crisis situations, and that requires effective solutions that respect for international humanitarian law.

Fourth, the international humanitarian system needs reform if it is to be able to respond more effectively to the growing refugee challenges and ensure that the responsibility for and burden of hosting refugees is more equitably shared among the members of the international community. Meanwhile, adequate support must be provided to the countries that bear the brunt of today's refugee crisis. Seven of the ten largest countries hosting refugees today are OIC member States and are carrying more than their fair share of the global refugee burden.

Fifth, we should find ways to empower refugees economically and reduce the burden on host communities, while ensuring that these communities are not negatively affected.

Sixth, durable solutions for refugees should be based on voluntary return, hopefully in a context of peace. Wherever possible and feasible, settlement elsewhere, or integration, could also be pursued.

Seventh, we must work together effectively to deal with the negative policies, attitudes, racism and xenophobia directed at refugees.

Eighth, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development will be undermined if the international community does not accord large movements of refugees and migrants the priority they deserve.

As an international community, we have to admit that we have failed millions and millions of refugees around the world and that we have to do much, much better. The OIC will strive to play a more active and effective role in reducing the suffering of refugees and displaced persons and will strengthen its partnership with the United Nations system, particularly the UNHCR and the International Organization for Migration, as well as with other partners, in order to achieve our common objectives in the face of this important humanitarian challenge.

The Acting Co-Chair: I now call on His Excellency Mr. Lhou Lmarbouh, President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean.

Mr. Lmarbouh (Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean) (*spoke in French*): On behalf of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean, of which I have the honour to be President, I am grateful for this opportunity to enable the voice of the Parliamentary Assembly to be heard at today's important meeting devoted to one of the Mediterranean region's major problems.

The Mediterranean, cradle of civilizations, has today become an immense cemetery for thousands of men, women and children who risk their lives fleeing destitution and despair, wars and violence. The Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean has long stated through its parliamentary platform that this tragic phenomenon requires a new, more coherent approach, one based in responsibility-sharing and solidarity, not only as it relates to hosting those in need, but also with regard to the very root of the phenomenon.

Supporting refugees and migrants is an important responsibility. The international community must act and help the countries on the front lines, such as, in our region, Jordan, Lebanon, Turkey, Italy and Greece, but also North African countries, particularly Morocco, whose new migration and refugee policy we welcome, as it has become a host country that has regularized the status of tens of thousands of refugees. The flow of refugees will not stop until a lasting solution is found for the many hotbeds of tension and war zones in the Mediterranean. The international community is called to take action to that end.

The flow of migrants will only increase if the countries of the southern Mediterranean and the Sahel, which we now consider to be a region of immediate proximity to the Mediterranean, do not achieve economic and social development. Europe and international bodies are called to take action to that end.

Finally, we would like to call the General Assembly's attention to another type of immigration that is a threat to our region, namely, immigration resulting from climate change. We place all our hopes in the twenty-second Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, to be held in Marrakesh, Morocco in a few weeks, to begin to slow down climate change. Otherwise, we will be forced to deal with climate-induced immigration of people in the millions, indeed in the millions and not the thousands that we see today.

As an example of the new threat of climate-induced immigration, we cite Lake Chad, the water supply of the subregion of sub-Saharan Africa and the Sahel. Lake Chad has been losing surface area every year due, clearly, to drought and global warming. That has had an impact on a population of over 150 million inhabits, which according to experts will double soon. Therefore, if there is no economic development or if the change in climate trends is not reversed, then the population of that region will inexorably go to Europe through the Mediterranean.

The President: I now call on His Excellency Mr. Joe Thomas, Executive Director of Partners in Population and Development.

Mr. Thomas (Partners in Population and Development): Let me congratulate the General Assembly for adopting the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants (resolution 71/1), during this high-level meeting on addressing large movements of refugees and migrants. Partners in Population and Development (PPD), an inter-governmental alliance of 26 developing countries representing more than half of the world population, fully endorses the New York Declaration. We wish to place on the record our appreciation for a successful and inclusive process of intergovernmental negotiations leading to the

adoption of a global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration.

The history of civilization is founded on population mobility. People move from one place to another for many reasons, including better economic opportunities or to escape violence, poverty, food insecurity, persecution, discrimination, terrorism or human rights violations. Today human mobility is growing at a faster rate than the world's population. In 2015 alone the number surpassed 244 million.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development fully recognizes the positive contribution made by migrants for inclusive growth and sustainable development. The benefits and opportunities of safe, orderly and regular migration are substantial but often underestimated. Large transnational movements of refugees and migrants have political, economic, social, developmental and humanitarian ramifications. The complex challenges emanating from forced displacement and irregular migration in large movements are visible in many parts of the world today.

Those global phenomena call for global approaches and global solutions and require the collective commitment and action of nations. No one State can manage such movements on its own. Neighbouring or transit countries, mostly developing countries, are disproportionately affected. Their capacities have been severely stretched in many cases, affecting their own social and economic cohesion and development. On the other hand, desperate refugees and migrants are forced to take great risks, embarking on perilous journeys, which many may not survive.

The PPD strongly reaffirms that all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights and that everyone has the right to recognition everywhere as a person before the law. Despite our obligations under international law — which prohibit discrimination of any kind on the basis of race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, or national or social origin — increasingly xenophobic and racist responses to refugees and migrants are commonly experienced in many parts of the world. We strongly condemn acts and manifestations of racism, social discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance against refugees and migrants.

We acknowledge the Assembly's commitment to mainstreaming a gender perspective, promoting gender equality and empowering all women and girls, while fully respecting and protecting their human rights. The PPD reaffirms its commitment to working with member countries to combat sexual and gender-based violence to the greatest extent possible and to facilitate access to sexual and reproductive health-care services.

The New York Declaration underlines the multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination against refugees and migrant women and girls. Recognizing the significant contribution and leadership of women in refugee and migrant communities, it urges the international community to work towards ensuring their full, equal and meaningful participation in this effort. The PPD also urges all countries to address the vulnerabilities of migrants and refugees to HIV and their specific health-care needs, including sexual and reproductive health needs, and to develop local solutions and opportunities to respond to these challenges. The global community must commit to combating xenophobia, racism and discrimination in our societies against refugees and migrants and take measures to improve their integration and inclusion, as appropriate, with particular reference to access to education, health care, justice and language training.

Partners in Population and Development is fully committed to the spirit of the New York Declaration, as it would foster intergovernmental efforts in pushing the agenda for the adoption of a global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration. Furthermore, we will facilitate that commitment in the framework of South-South partnerships through greater support for capacity-building, encouraging commodity and technology transfer, policy and advocacy dialogue, knowledge-sharing, and developing partnerships and population diplomacy.

The President: I now call on His Excellency Mr. Ernesto Samper Pizano, Secretary-General of the Union of South American Nations.

Mr. Samper Pizano (Union of South American Nations) (*spoke in Spanish*): We are gathered here in New York as the topic of migrants and refugees has become a worldwide humanitarian tragedy. It is not only a matter of Syrian migrants that have taken over international headlines, but also those expelled from Kenya towards the Sudan, Palestinians expelled by Israel, Latinos turned back at the United States border, Cubans crossing South America to reach American soil and become citizens and millions of Haitians abandoned to their fates.

Regrettably, the response to the movement of anxious migrants throughout the world, which is under 3 per cent of the world's population, has often led to security measures, new concentration camps, immigration police, unreachable areas and walls. Accursed walls, like the Berlin Wall, are being built to signal hostility between territories, as we saw during wars in the Middle Ages. The Mexican wall, the Israeli wall and the Moroccan wall are all examples of walls that are as solid and hard as the souls that ordered them to be built. They are walls that divide and kill us. Walls are the most recent expression of a strategy that reflects scant humanitarian regard for immigrants that begins with temporary restrictions at customs and ends with police measures that treat them like criminals and divide and destroy their families.

It is clear that the forced migration of migrants displaced by violence from my country, Colombia, for example, or of refugees and asylum seekers, victims of human trafficking and those fleeing the catastrophic effects of global warming and wars, is the result of phenomena in which human beings have played a part. In addition to the global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration that is being launched to address that phenomenon, we need another approach that views global migration as a right and not a concession, with migrants as citizens of the world and not as global offenders. In a globalized environment in which the free movement of goods, services and capital exists, the possibility of the free movement of people should also exist.

In the Union of South American Nations, we are attempting to deepen the concept of South American citizenship so that it is recognized as a right — a right to mobility for 430 million South Americans, 63 per cent of whom wish to migrate or move elsewhere within their region. That cannot be considered to be regular migratory flows but rather as the legitimate expression of a community that lives in a large house and wants to move around in it.

In sum, we welcome international regulations that seek to reduce the causes of migration and regulate the movement of people in a humane manner. Such regulations must fall within the broad scope of global citizenship that allows people to take part in globalization, which today is much too focused on money, products, services and technology, and very little on social issues and the mobility of human beings.

The Acting Co-Chair: I now call on His Excellency Mr. Narinder Kakar, Permanent Observer of the University for Peace.

Mr. Kakar (University for Peace): As is abundantly clear to us, the movement of refugees and migrants across international borders has reached unprecedented levels. Innocent people are compelled to flee their homes due to conflicts and life-threatening situations. At the same time, large movements are also taking place in order for people to seek better economic and social opportunities elsewhere, but the journeys of such people can be fraught with peril. Appalling tales of tragedies are featured daily in the headlines. It is time for the international community to agree on an effective response to this crisis.

The international community must come together in a spirit of shared responsibility for the world's refugees and migrants. More countries must resettle more people who have been forced from their homes. Everyone everywhere must stand up against the animosity that so many refugees, migrants and minority communities face. The international community must mobilize sufficient resources to tackle this crucial problem.

The challenge is one we can and must tackle together. In the first instance, we must make every effort to prevent conflict from erupting and maintain peace. To achieve that goal, we must put to use one of the greatest and most effective means of ennobling and transforming human beings, namely, education. Education plays an important role in our lives in achieving and maintaining peace.

The conditions in which refugees live vary from well established camps and collective centres to makeshift shelters or no shelters at all. Half of them live in urban areas and many of them have achieved some degree of education, ranging from secondary school to undergraduate and even graduate studies. However, the majority of refugees have very little to no opportunities when it comes to higher education. That point was highlighted by the young man who spoke this morning in the opening plenary on behalf of civil society and by the Foreign Minister of Qatar (see A/71/PV.3 and A/71/PV.4 A, respectively).

Most donor support comes in the form of humanitarian assistance to meet basic needs, relegating education for human development and conflict prevention and resolution to a secondary plane. As members are aware, the University for Peace was

established pursuant to resolution 35/55 to provide humankind with an international institution of higher education for peace and with the aim of promoting the spirit of understanding, tolerance and peaceful coexistence among all human beings. To that end, apart from its economic and training programmes, the University has created a scholarship fund to provide post-graduate education on matters of peace, conflict resolution and transformation, and security-related issues for approximately 100 refugees per year at its campus in San José, Costa Rica.

In 2013-2014, for example, the University for Peace successfully organized a pilot programme aimed at refugees, which was carried out with the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees. The thematic focus of the programme is academic training on peace, conflict and security-related issues, including human rights, gender issues and peacebuilding. The programme aims at providing refugees with the knowledge and practical skills necessary for finding and implementing durable solutions to the challenges they will face in host countries as well as in their countries of origin. It serves to strengthen the capacities of refugees and internally displaced persons by providing them with expertise in peace-related issues that contributes to meaningful and effective dialogue and in dealing with the complex challenges facing today's globalized society.

Lastly, there is an urgent need to make funding for humanitarian needs, in general, and for education, in particular, more predictable and sustainable at levels much higher than those that prevail today. The global community must realize that it is absolutely essential that adequate funding be provided in a timely manner for conflict-prevention efforts, meeting the needs of refugees and internally displaced persons, and making education available to those with refugee status, if we are to succeed in alleviating the human crisis.

The University for Peace is at the disposal of the United Nations system and the international community to support the work of the Organization, pursuant to the mandate given to it by the General Assembly.

The Acting Co-Chair: I call on the representative of Singapore in explanation of position.

Mr. Teo (Singapore): The President of the General Assembly, in the interests of time, encouraged delegations this morning to deliver any explanations of position after the adoption of the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants (resolution 71/1), as part of their national statements in this plenary meeting. In this context, my delegation is taking the floor now in explanation of position after the adoption of the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants and its annexes.

Singapore welcomes the adoption of the landmark New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants. As we continue to find durable solutions to deal with large movements of refugees and migrants, we must acknowledge that individual States vary in their circumstances and capacities to respond to this important issue. As the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees has noted, there can be no one-size-fits-all approach.

We welcome the fact that the New York Declaration affirms that the commitments undertaken should take into account differing national realities, capacities and levels of development, and should respect national policies and priorities, as stated in paragraph 21 of the Declaration. It follows that any commitment to action in the Declaration and its annexes to address large movements of refugees and migrants should also be consistent with the rights and obligations of States under international law.

The Acting Co-Chair: We have heard the last speaker inscribed on the list. I thank all participants for their insightful contributions to the high-level meeting. The level of participation is an indication of the importance that Member States accord to the issue of addressing large movements of refugees and migrants.

The meeting rose at 6.35 p.m.